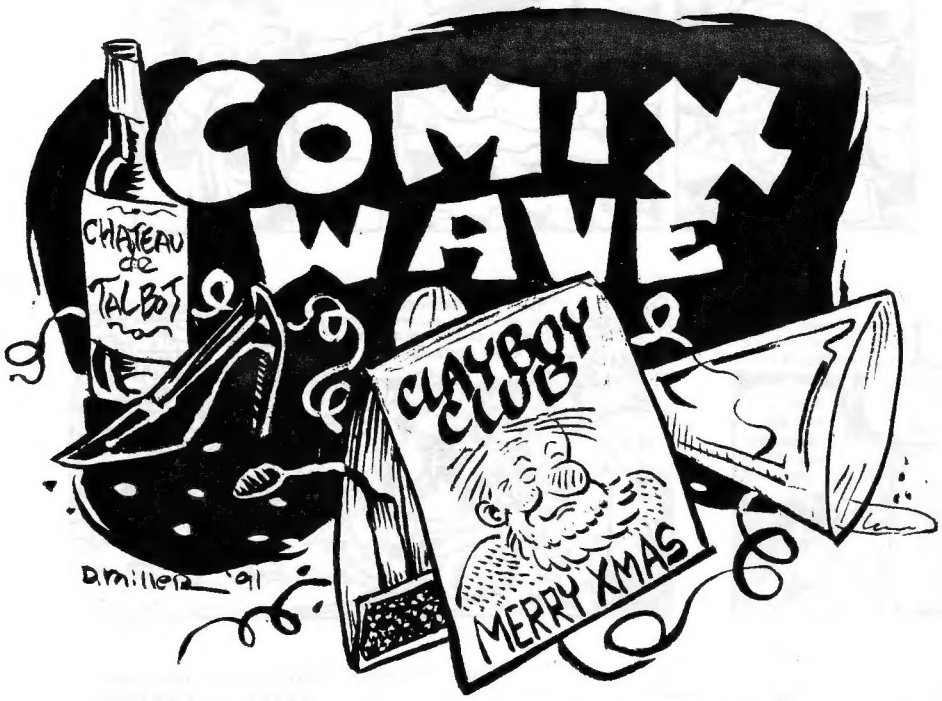

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AMERICAN SPLENDOR 16 is on sale. A great cover and a number of Harvey Pekar's stories and vignettes. He has a nice discussion of black and white relations in which he justifies writing about black people using the rhythms of their speech as well as their patois. I agree with this. I think writers and artists have to fight against the political repression underway in this world and one way we fight is to keep the lines of communication open between the races and sexes.

FALLOPIAN FOOTBALL

And did you know that no less than 11 women tried out for junior-high football in the Sumner School District in Bonney Lake, Washington? As I sit here, Bertha Guevara of Lakeridge Junior High is adjusting her shoulder pads. She's 5'7 and weighs in at 127 pounds. Plays tackle. Ciseley Wingate is an offensive guard on the varsity at Pullman High. I don't know why this even made it into the newspapers, frankly. For several years I followed women's rugby here in Berkeley and if you think these women take it easy on each other, you wrong, Baby! Rugby, of course, is real football. The stuff you see on tv played by guys wearing all that plastic and rubber armor doesn't even compare. I know a lot of you have never heard of rugby and if you have you think it is something they only do in England, but you would be wrong. We have a dozen or so teams locally and they play people from all over the world. I've seen some great games and even the so-so games have been more exciting than organized football. You never see rugby on television, of course, because it is an *amateur* sport. How's that for a joke?

MICHAEL JACKSON: WHITE AT LAST

I saw the MTV special the other night [late November that was] and it ended with a revised version of Michael Jackson's latest which ought to be called Michael Jackson: White At Last. If there is any recent political trend that wasn't exploited in that video, it's too local to matter. I loved seeing all those beautiful well fed little kids dressed in rags to represent the hungry of the world. Hey, Michael is rich enough to feed half of the tribes in Africa and South America just on one royalty check. The products he endorses are designed to rot your teeth and fill the pockets of corporate clients who are directly responsible for keeping most of this world in slavery. Jackson spends enough money on plastic surgery in a single year to feed and clothe all the homeless workers in Detroit and Chicago. I see MTV as nothing but corporate brainwash, a mass of useless and often dangerous products juxtaposed with personalities who have turned themselves into product composites. The misguided who spend their time picketing adult video stores *for their kids' sake* ought to spend five minutes looking at the kind of degrading image of woman that is being driven into their kids' skulls via MTV. With an election coming up, we can expect to see these clods paraded before us on the six o'clock news while the same lying office seekers run off at the mouth about porn as they ignore the serious economic depression going on in this country.

What's MTV? Mighty Terrible Video. Massive Tits on View. Many Tortured Vermin. Mothers' Torrid Visions. Mostly Tactless Violence. Mainly Tacky Violence. Mutant Turtle Vistas. Make up your own.

LEGALLY SPEAKING

Well, I see 3,976 people just passed the local bar exam, bringing the total of lawyers in California to 132,000. That's in case you wonder why modern life is getting more and more complicated. All corporations have lawyers on staff and these legal beagles have to justify their existence so they keep on filing lawsuits. I had one experience with a lawsuit back in the early seventies and it taught me all I needed to know. This was a personal injury suit against a cab company. It was cut and dried. I was run down in a crosswalk by a driver who ran a red light. I wasn't badly hurt and this was a penny ante deal for the lawyer who took it. The whole thing took four years--FOUR YEARS! and I got $637 out of a $1500 settlement. Lawyers take PI cases on contingency which means they get a third of the settlement plus expenses. The cab company lawyer offered me $375 to sign a waiver while I was half-conscious in the hospital waiting room, but I declined. I didn't know how badly I was hurt. Turned out I was just bruised up and you have to be mangled all to hell before any big bucks figure in the game. There are a number of well to do paraplegic and quadraplegics around Berkeley, but, frankly, I don't want to trade places with the electric wheelers. There's a guy uptown who has one of those specialized vans that cost some insurance company nearly a hundred grand.

Anyway, 132,000 lawyers. Whew! That means the chances are very good that the guy next to you in the post office line is one.

WILD, MAN!

I've seen a lot of parodies of the new Wild man thing lately, you know, guys trying to get back to their primitive roots by meeting in hunting lodges and imitating the behavior of various Indian tribes. The argument is that modern man is so covered up with fashion and technology that he has lost touch with his meat self. Well, we still have out rites and rituals, but they have become symbolic. Something like **The Terminator** is about how difficult it is to escape the past. All entertainment is vestigial ritual. We no longer have to suffer the pain and strain and boredom of the hunt. We can watch it on tv or in a mall cineplex. So the blood is karo syrup and vegetable dye and the android's arm is a lot of plastic and latex, big deal. It *looks* real enough. It's been a long time since anyone really hunted. Even the guys in the makinaws with the pick-up trucks are techno hunters. They don't hike out there in the wild. They drive their trucks and listen to their Willie Nelson tapes on the way. They wouln't know any more about making an arrowhead from a stone and a bow from a branch of pine than I would. They use the latest guns with laserscropes and the majority don't even clean their own kills. So I have to grin at this new men's ritual trip. Business guys getting back to their primitive selves in lodges with central heating and catered buffets. Makes a cute sitcom, but for a kid who grew up in Nebraska and had to live through a few real hunting trips--well, count me out.

The Owl Gallery [465 Powell St., San Francisco] is presenting a retrospective of the work of animator **Bob Clampett** during the month of December, 1991. Animation cells from the **Beany and Cecil** shows will be displayed. Info from Carmen Pirics, 415-781-5464.

Diane Noomin edited a collection of Bad Girl Art entitled **TWISTED SISTERS.** The book includes work by Carol Lay, Phoebe Gloeckner, Krystine Kryttre, Julie Doucet, et al. If you got off on the original comic books, you'll wax nostalgic over this stuff. Check your local comic book store for this one.

CEREBUS 152 is now on sale.

Marvel has just published **SUBURBAN JERSEY NINJA SHE-DEVILS**, which has to be one of the sickest comic books of the year. It begins with a vampire murdering a five-year-old child and gets worse. This is no underground with Adults only pasted all over the cover and it has the approval of the Comics Code Authority pasted prominently on the cover. Shows you what a joke that code is. Steve Gerber, who did **HOWARD THE DUCK**, is responsible for this nightmarish sewage.

The City Limits Gazette is still happening under the editorship of **Steve Willis** and I still see a bit about Morty the Dog here and there. Newave comix are still around, you know. With each new generation of cartoonists comes a new run of minicomix. Send Steve a buck and check out an issue of the **Gazette**. POB 390, McCleary, WA 98557-0390.

Two newave comix out from Paul Kent Sewell. **A DATE WITH DEATH** and **RIGHTEOUS BLACK WOMAN.** $1.50 pp for both. 540 Stoneford Ave., Oakland, CA 94603.

The Shitkickin' Kid #7 is 50¢/stamp from Greg Stromberg, 303 S. 5th St., Oregon, IL 61061.

OK... I'LL BE 40 MINUTES.
YKNOW, I WISH I HAD THE RIGHT KIND OF HAIR FOR DREADLOCKS...
HMM... I'VE HEARD THAT AT "GROOETRIM" THEY CAN DO THEY DO ANYONE.
ECCH! I MEAN REAL DREADLOCKS, NOT MALL DREADLOCKS!

HMM. THERE MUST BE SOMETHING I CAN DO... I WONDER HOW MUCH THOSE PEOPLE SELLING STRING BRACELETS MAKE?
PROBABLY NOT MUCH. AND THERE'S LOTS OF COMPETITION!

I just finished reading the last few issues of Terry Laban's **UNSUPERVISED EXISTENCE.** I've noticed Terry's political cartoons in the last few issues of **IN THESE TIMES** and been quite impressed. He's a realist with a nice range of characters. **UE6** deals with what happens when your woman friend has an affair with another woman. The panels laid around this page are from various issues of UE and should give you an idea of Laban's style.

HE DID?
YEA! ME AN' RUSTY WAS SMOKIN' DOPE IN TH' BASEMENT, AN' MY DAD CAME DOWN AN' TOLD US TO GIVE HIM ALL OUR DOPE, AN' THAT WE COULDN'T SMOKE IN TH' HOUSE NO MORE...
SO I GO "FUCK YOU YOU GOTTA TAKE ..." SO HE CAME OVER AN' I PUSHED HIM DOWN!
YOU PUSHED DOWN YOUR DAD?
FUCK YES!
HAVE YOU SEEN JIM? HE'S SMALLER THAN JIMMY!

Penguin books has issued a **RAW** oneshot by Ben Katchor. **CHEAP NOVELTIES: The Pleasures of Urban Decay.** Check it out at your local comic book store. Looks like **RAW** has come to an end. So saith Arte Spiegelman in a recent interview.

THE COMPLETE CRUMB is up to Volume 7. The latest has a couple of pages of the great Crumb's egotistical nostalgic ramblings for an introduction and a lot of reprinted material from the master's early books.

There is now a companion to **IN LIVING COLOR.** Written by Nelson George, it contains a lot of photos and several scripts. This is the show that has the balls **SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE** used to have.

EL VIBORA 142 is $9 pp from Jose M. Berenguer, Plaza Beatas 3, 08003 Barcelona, Spain. The Barcelona gang has a new title **KISS COMIX 1** for the same price. **KISS** is all sex. Adults only on all underground comix! Send an age statement with first order.

Yes, Virginia, there is another **TELEGRAPH AVENUE STREET CALENDAR!** The 1992 edition is $8 pp from Ace Backwards, 1630 University Avenue, Apt. 26, Berkeley, CA 94703. The Hate Man is on the cover and quite simply this is like nothing you have ever seen before or will ever see again.

For reasons that have to do with the origins of the United States, Americans will never accept any literature that does not plainly support the prejudiced and aspirations of a powerful and bigoted middle class which is now supplementing its powerful churches with equally powerful universities where what is said and thought and imagined is homogenized to a degree that teachers and students do not begin to suspect because they have never set foot outside the cage that they were born in. Like the gorilla who was taught to draw, they keep drawing the bars of their cage, and think it is the world.

--Gore Vidal